

Administration of Barack Obama, 2016

**Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of the Hannover Messe Trade Fair in
Hannover, Germany**

April 24, 2016

Thank you very much. Hello, everyone. *Guten abend!* I want to thank my great partner and friend, Chancellor Merkel, for inviting me here to Hannover. It is great to be with you at the world's leading showcase for industrial technologies that power our global economy.

I'm pleased that this year the United States is the official partner country for the very first time. And it is an honor to be the first United States President ever to attend the Hannover Messe. It's also quite a pleasure to be here as Germans celebrate the 500th anniversary of your beer purity law. [*Laughter*] I will—I may join you in that celebration. [*Laughter*]

I'm joined here today by our Commerce Secretary, Penny Pritzker, more than 350 American companies—including more than 200 small and medium-sized businesses—and dozens of economic development organizations from States, cities, and communities across the United States. And I am here, and we are here because we are ready to do even more business with Germany, more business with Europe, and more business with the world.

In many ways, this event reflects the larger story of the alliance between our two countries. After the Second World War, much of this city and Europe lay in ruins. But then, together, we set out to rebuild, with the help of the Marshall Plan. Just a few months after that plan was announced, businesspeople and investors from around the world gathered in Hannover, in a factory, to see how they could help spark what would become a German economic miracle. And for nearly 70 years, the world has come to Hannover to experience the technologies that have helped to deliver unprecedented prosperity to people around the world.

As President, I've worked to make sure that we are sustaining this spirit of innovation in the United States. We've launched next-generation manufacturing hubs and new online tools to help entrepreneurs start new businesses faster. Over the past 6 years, the United States has created more than 14 million private sector jobs, including hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs. And here at Hannover Messe, you will see examples of American growth and ingenuity, including a full, 3-D-printed electric car. Angela, maybe you and I, we can go driving. [*Laughter*] I'll have to ask Secret Service, but—[*laughter*].

Because we live in a global economy where so much of our economic growth and job creation is fueled by trade, I've also worked to make sure we're trading more with each other. Germany has long been one of our top trading partners, and during my time in office, we've boosted U.S. exports to Germany, and we've increased our bilateral trade by nearly 40 percent to a record \$235 billion last year. German investment in the United States now supports more than 600,000 American jobs. And you're selling more of your products to America as well. Last year, for the first time in decades, the United States became the top market for exports of German goods.

So we need to build on this success. I want us doing even more business together, more trade, and creating more jobs for our people, which brings me to my first message today, because I know we have companies here from all over the world. As you look around the globe and try to decide where to invest, where to set up shop, I urge you to select the United States of America: "SelectUSA." Of course, I would imagine the Chancellor makes a pretty strong

case for investing in Germany, and there are a lot of good reasons for that. But as President of the United States, I've got a pretty strong argument as well. So, Angela, with your understanding, I'm going to give everybody here the best pitch that I can.

In the United States, you have access to one of the world's largest markets, more than 320 million people. Our world-class universities and research centers are responsible for more than a quarter of the world's research and development. We've been issuing about 300,000 utility patents a year for new ways to manufacture. Americans are among the most productive workers in the world; manufacturing productivity has surged. We've become more energy efficient, which lowers costs. And with our SelectUSA initiative—cutting redtape, streamlining regulations—it's even easier for companies like yours to come and build in America. That's a pretty good sales pitch. [*Laughter*]

Which brings me to the other message I want to deliver today. The United States and the European Union already have the largest trade and investment relationship in the world. We trade about \$3 billion in goods and services every single day. We invest more than \$4 trillion in each other's economies. And all that trade and investment supports around 13 million jobs across our countries. That's good news.

So what's the problem? As your companies know, there are still too many barriers that prevent more transatlantic trade and investment. Even though tariffs between the United States and the EU are relatively low on average, some products still face high tariffs, very high tariffs—essentially, taxes that make it harder to export and sell. Different regulations, rules, standards—all these drive up costs, keep manufacturers out of markets, or force companies to make different versions of the same product for different markets; duplicative tests and inspections and more costs. Taken together, these barriers are holding us back from even greater trade, investment, and job creation.

That's the reason why the United States and the EU have moved forward with the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or T-TIP. I know that trade can evoke great emotions, in all of our countries. Over the years, some workers and families have felt the costs—the localized costs of globalization and automation and jobs shipped overseas—without necessarily seeing or feeling the benefits of trade, which are more diffuse and broadly shared. And these anxieties are real, and at a time of growing inequality in many advanced economies, we have to address them. But the answer is not to pull up the drawbridge and stop trade; in a global economy, that's not possible. The answer is to learn from the past and do trade the right way, with high standards for workers and consumers and the environment. And that's the kind of trade that we're pursuing in this partnership.

T-TIP will eliminate tariffs, simplify procedures, bridge differences in regulations, and cut redtape, all of which will make it easier to invest and trade, including for our small businesses who create so many of our jobs. And I want to be clear about this. T-TIP will not lower standards, it will raise standards even higher: high labor standards to protect workers, high standards to protect consumers and give them more choices, high standards to protect the environment. And something very important in our digital economies, it will help ensure we have a free and open Internet, the greatest engine for innovation the world has ever seen.

It is true, though, that T-TIP has larger, strategic benefits as well. At a time of widening inequality in the world, including in Europe, T-TIP will help encourage growth across the 28 nations of the EU, including southern Europe. At a time when some are questioning the future of European integration, T-TIP will encourage the higher long-term growth Europe needs to create more jobs, including for our young people. At a time when other countries are trying to

shape global trade to their advantage, our countries—which make up nearly half the global economy—have the opportunity to write the rules for trade in a way that reflects our values, like rule of law, transparency, and respect for human rights.

And finally, in this time of uncertainty, including here in Europe, when others would use trade and energy as a weapon, T-TIP would help Europe diversify energy markets and increase energy security. So for all these reasons, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership would reinforce our larger transatlantic relationship, which has been the foundation for our prosperity and security these past seven decades. It would bind us even closer and help lift the fortunes of our people, renewing confidence that democracy delivers progress.

So in closing, I want to point out that we've now been negotiating T-TIP for 3 years. We have made important progress. But time is not on our side. If we don't complete negotiations this year, then upcoming political transitions—in the United States and Europe—could mean this agreement won't be finished for quite some time. I know the politics are hard. But we have to keep making our case, stating the facts, and dispelling any misperceptions. We can't let this opportunity close. The time to complete T-TIP is now, and I'm here to say that the United States is prepared to make every effort to reach an ambitious, comprehensive, and high-standard agreement this year.

And just as I have demonstrated my willingness to invest political capital back home to expand trade that creates jobs, I call on leaders across Europe to join me and Chancellor Merkel in doing the same. That's how we can sustain the progress that began here in Hannover nearly 70 years ago. That's how we can unleash the next wave of innovation and the jobs that lift up our people. And that's how we can keep strong our transatlantic relationship and a global economy of rules and high standards for generations to come. So thank you so much for this opportunity. *Vielen danke*. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:58 p.m. in the Kuppelsaal at the Hannover Congress Center.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Hannover Messe Trade Fair, opening ceremony in Hannover, Germany.

Locations: Hannover, Germany.

Names: Merkel, Angela; Pritzker, Penny S.

Subjects: Business and industry : Foreign investment in U.S.; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Advanced manufacturing, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; Commerce, Department of : Secretary; Commerce, Department of : SelectUSA trade and investment initiative; Commerce, international : Consumer protection standards; Commerce, international : Environmental protection standards; Commerce, international : Labor protection standards; Communications : Internet neutrality; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Europe : Energy sources, diversification efforts; Europe : Trade with U.S.; Europe : Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP); Germany : Chancellor; Germany : Hannover Messe Trade Fair in Hannover; Germany : President Obama's visit; Germany : Trade with U.S.; Science and technology : Research and development.

DCPD Number: DCPD201600261.